

Proposed North West Transmission Developments

Engagement Update

July to December 2022



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About the project

The proposed North West Transmission Developments (NWT) include 240km of new and upgraded transmission lines and other energy infrastructure that will increase the capacity of Tasmania's electricity network.

The developments will link the transmission network from the Cressy area to Sheffield, Burnie, Hampshire and Staverton, providing enough capacity for Marinus Link and other renewable energy developments to connect into the electricity grid.

The developments will support Australia's energy transition alongside Tasmania's ambition to be a world leading renewable energy provider.

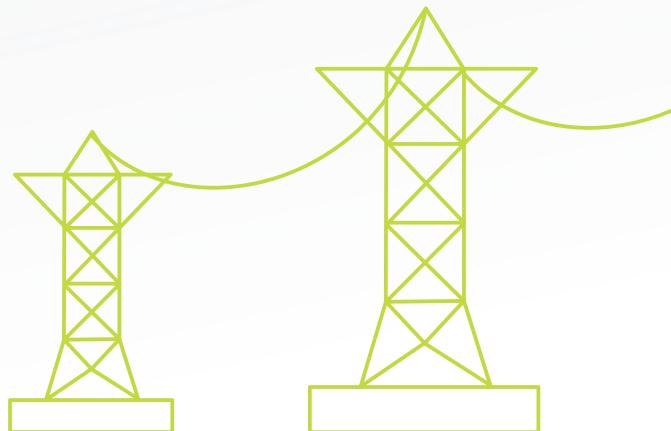
The project is currently in the design and approvals phase.

Introduction

This document provides an outline of the engagement activities that were carried out between July and December 2022 for the NWT.

It builds on the engagement report released in mid-2022 which outlines the activities completed between January and June 2022. You can view previous engagement reports [here](#).

Involving stakeholders and the community in the development of our projects ensures we achieve the best outcomes for the community, the environment and the project. Your feedback to date is already helping to shape the direction of the NWT and we are committed to working with you as the project continues to develop.



This report focuses on feedback gathered from the general community and stakeholders about the project and does not include detailed feedback from landowners. Engagement with impacted landowners is ongoing and will continue throughout all phases of the project.

Engagement activities for the Staverton to Hampshire Hills section of the route are not included in this report as we are currently running a separate community engagement process for this project. You can find out more information about Staverton to Hampshire Hills [here](#).

How we have engaged

We have engaged regularly and broadly with stakeholders, community and landowners between July and December 2022 to collect feedback to inform the development of the project.

Feedback collected during this phase of the project has helped us understand your concerns, what's important to you and the topics you want to know more about, and develop a Community Benefit Sharing Program (CBSP).

The figure below provides a snapshot of the activities that were carried out between July and December 2022.



We promoted engagement activities using a range of communications channels, including:



TasNetworks website



TasNetworks online engagement portal



Letters and postcards to nearby residents



Facebook



E-newsletters



Media



Public notices and advertisements in local papers



Radio advertising



What we asked and who we heard from

We heard from a broad range of community members and stakeholders during this phase of engagement.

The focus of our engagement can be separated into two main topics:

- NWTD design and development
- Community Benefits Sharing Program

NWTD design and development

Throughout July to December 2022 we continued to undertake engagement activities to raise awareness about the project and understand what is important to you and what you are concerned about.

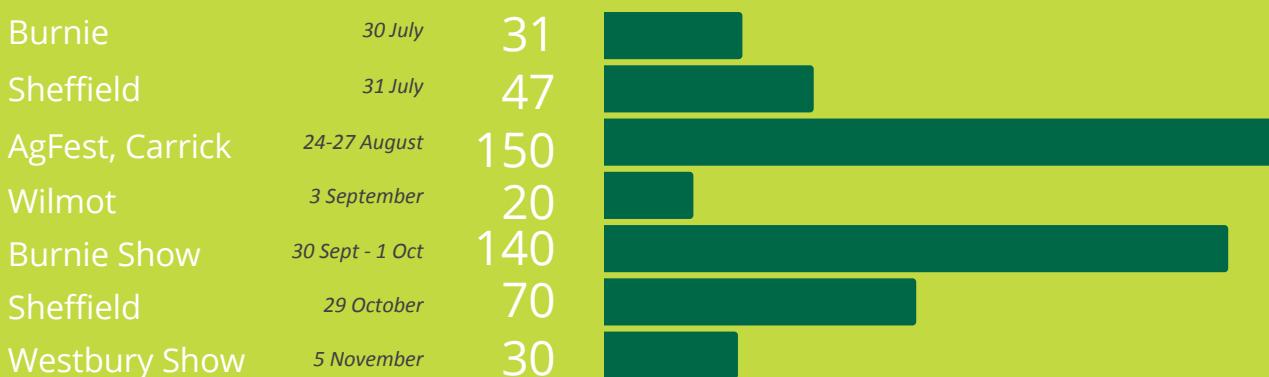
We also engaged with Tasmanian businesses to provide information about how they can get involved in supplying goods and services to the project.

Information sessions

The purpose of these sessions was to provide information about the NWTD, the Community Benefits Sharing Program and capture feedback.

We heard from a broad range of community members across North West Tasmania including directly impacted landowners, residents, businesses and visitors to the area.

We held seven pop-up community information sessions at events and locations along the proposed transmission line route. We spoke to a number of people at each event, captured below.



Telephone survey

We conducted a random telephone survey with 1,000 respondents who were broadly representative of the community from the six affected North West Tasmanian local government areas.

The focus of the survey was to understand the community's level of awareness and sentiment towards the project and explore what people perceived as the related advantages and disadvantages. We also asked how they want to be communicated with and what topics they want to know more about. Details of the survey outcomes are provided below.

Industry and business event

A “Meet the Project” industry event was held on 30 November to provide Tasmanian businesses and suppliers with an opportunity to learn more about the project, how they can get involved in supplying goods and services and meet the project team.

The event was held in Burnie and was attended by over 50 business representatives.

A presentation was used to provide an overview of the project and outline the opportunities for local businesses to get involved. At the end of the presentation, attendees were able to clarify any questions they had through a Q&A session.

Stakeholder Liaison Group

The NWTD Stakeholder Liaison Group (SLG) was established in October 2021 and includes 13 representatives from key industry groups, peak bodies, education, skills and training sectors and state government organisations.

We held three meetings with the SLG between July and December 2022 at the Cradle Coast Energy Hub in Burnie. We discussed a range of topics including:

- Community Benefits Sharing Program (CBSP) and governance arrangements
- Communications and engagement activities
- Environmental, planning and heritage approvals
- Procurement strategy
- Proposed funding arrangements for NWTD and Marinus Link
- Renewable Energy Zones
- Energy Charter community and landowner social licence research project
- SLG focus and topics for 2023.

The SLG were asked to provide feedback on the common concerns and opportunities raised by the communities they represent, as well as engagement and communications activities. They also provided feedback on the CBSP, membership of the SLG and the topics to be discussed in 2023.

More information about the SLG, including agendas, presentations and meeting minutes can be found [here](#).



Partnership with Rural Alive and Well

In 2022 the NWT Project Team partnered with Rural Alive and Well (RAW). RAW is a not-for-profit organisation that runs programs in rural and remote communities across Tasmania to build mentally healthy and resilient communities.

We understand the impact major projects like NWT can have on communities and this partnership provides us with the opportunity to support the communities we work in by running activities that increase connectivity and reduce social isolation.

Between July and December 2022 we partnered with RAW to deliver the Utes and Boots event held on 29 October in Sheffield.

Over 70 people attended the family friendly event which included games, competitions, face painting and more. The event also provided the opportunity for the community to learn more about the NWT and connect with community services like the National Emergency Management Agency.

Community Benefits Sharing Program

Between July and December, we continued to work with the community, a Youth Panel, and stakeholders to co-design a Community Benefit Sharing Program (CBSP) for the project.

We also collected feedback to inform the development of governance arrangements for the CBSP including how the program will be administered and applications for funding assessed and evaluated.

Focus Groups

We held two community focus groups online via Zoom on 26 July and 28 July. A total of 23 participants attended the two focus group meetings. The purpose of the focus groups was to:

- Capture feedback from the broader community about the Youth Panel's draft recommendations
- Understand social and other issues that are important to the community and how these could be considered as part of the CBSP

Participants were asked to share what is important to them and provide feedback on the Youth Panel's draft recommendations. This included:

- The proposed focus areas for benefits being delivered under the CBSP
- Eligibility requirements for applicants and applications
- Demonstrated values

Feedback was captured and used to inform the development of the final draft of the program.

Online Survey

An online survey was also used to collect feedback on the Youth Panel's draft recommendations. The survey was hosted on TasNetworks YourSay page and was completed by 12 participants.

The survey was open between 25 July and 31 August and consisted of 17 questions. We used a combination of open and closed questions to capture feedback on the draft recommendations which focused on three main areas of the CBSP:

- What projects and/or activities should be awarded funding under the program
- Who should be awarded funding under the program
- How the community benefits program should be delivered.

The feedback collected through the online survey was also used to inform the development of the final draft of the CBSP.



Community BBQ events

Two community BBQ events were held in North West Tasmania to raise awareness about the NWTD project and share and seek feedback on the Youth Panel's draft recommendations. The first event was held on Saturday 30 July at the Burnie Community House, Shorewell Park and the second on Sunday 31 July in Main Street, Sheffield.

The events were promoted through an advertising marketing campaign using the following channels and methods:

- TasNetworks' social media channels
- NWTD e-update
- Newspaper adverts
- Letter box drops
- Local radio interviews in the week leading up to the event.

The events also attracted people walking by the pop-up locations. Both events were attended by two members of the Youth Panel who assisted the project team in communicating their draft recommendations to community members. The events were catered for by the City of Burnie Rotary Club and Rotary Club of Latrobe.

Community members were presented with information on the Youth Panel process and the draft framework they had developed. During the events, community members were asked to provide feedback on the following questions.

- What aspects of the draft recommendations did they like/support?
- What aspects of the draft recommendations didn't they like/would change? What changes would they like to see?
- Any other comments about the draft recommendations of the Youth Panel?

Any additional feedback about the Youth Panel, the draft recommendations and the NWTD project was also captured.



Stakeholder workshops

We held two face-to-face workshops with stakeholders who have experience delivering community benefit sharing schemes or applying for grants programs. This included local government, social enterprises, and community groups from across North West Tasmania.

The purpose of the workshops was to benefit from their experience and capture informed feedback about the Youth Panel's draft recommendations and potential governance arrangements for the CBSP.

The first workshop was held in Ulverstone on 1 August and attended by 15 stakeholder representatives. During this workshop, information was shared with participants on the NWTD, the proposed CBSP, the Youth Panel process and their draft recommendations. Feedback was sought from participants on governance options for the CBSP and the application process. Participants were also asked to provide feedback about draft eligibility requirements for funded initiatives under the CBSP.

The second workshop was held in Burnie on 4 November and was attended by five of the participants from meeting one. Participants were provided with a recap of the first meeting and a summary of the combined feedback received about governance arrangements.

Following this, participants were presented with a range of options for each governance component for the CBSP. The options were based on the initial feedback received from stakeholders during the first phase of engagement and related to:

- Funding models
- Administration models
- Application process models.

Participants were then asked to consider the options for each governance component and indicate their preferred option to inform the final governance arrangements for the CBSP. Participants' discussions and considerations of each potential option and their preferences were captured to inform the development of the CBSP framework.



Stakeholder Liaison Group

During meeting six in August, SLG members were asked to consider the Youth Panel's draft recommendations and provide feedback on what should be considered when designing the CBSP's governance arrangements, including funding arrangements and program administration.

They were also asked to provide recommendations about which stakeholder groups should be included in discussions about governance arrangements. Further updates on the CBSP engagement and program development were provided to SLG members during the September and November meetings.



What we heard

NWTD design and development

Information sessions

Below is a snapshot of what we heard at the pop-up information sessions.

The most common questions raised by attendees related to the following topics:



Electromagnetic fields



Scope, location, and timing of the project



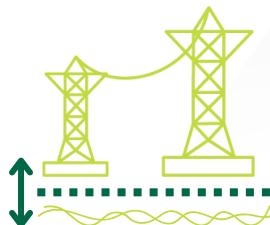
Impact on power prices



Job opportunities



Cost of the project and who will pay



Overhead versus underground



Business case and cost benefit assessment

Telephone survey

The telephone survey gave us a great insight into community awareness and perceptions of the project, along with an understanding of the topics people want to know more about.

This is the second time we have completed this survey with the North West community, with the initial survey completed in June. We have compared the results across to the two surveys and called out any key differences and similarities in the summary below.

It's important to note that 80% of respondents completed the survey for the first time.

- When asked, 34% of respondents indicated they had heard of the North West Transmission Developments when provided with the project name. This increased to 69% once participants were provided with a short description. These results are consistent to the June survey results.
- Based on their understanding of the project, 48% of respondents indicated they supported or strongly supported the project and 26% were neutral. These results are consistent with the June survey results.

The most commonly raised benefits and advantages of the project identified by respondents included:

- Employment and jobs (24% down from 31% in June 2022)
- Cheaper electricity (17%)
- Reliable electricity supply (17%)
- Clean energy generation (13%)
- For 31% of respondents there were no perceived benefits. This increased from 26% in the June survey results.

The most commonly raised perceived disadvantages of the project identified by respondents included:

- Increase in power prices (29% up from 22% in June 2022)
- General environmental impacts (15%)
- Power taken offshore (15%)
- Does not benefit Tasmanians (12%)
- For 28% of respondents there were no perceived disadvantages which is consistent with the June survey results.

There were some differences in terms of perceived project advantages and disadvantages between age groups.

The top three channels respondents go to for trusted information about what is happening in their community include:

- General media (37%)
- Social media (22%)
- Newsletters and hard copy information (19%)

Other channels mentioned less frequently include website, ABC channels, word of mouth, television, community forums and radio.

For the 34% of respondents who indicated they would like more information about the project the common topics they want to know more about include:

- General information about timing, location and next steps (44%)
- Environmental impacts (32%)
- Social and economic impacts (31%)
- Visual and landscape impacts (19%)
- Planning and approval process (17%)

Other feedback received through the survey indicated respondents want more information about the project, better understand the benefits for Tasmanians and want to know how the project is being delivered in a financially responsible way.

Industry and business event

Suppliers and businesses who attend the industry event were provided with the opportunity to ask questions about the project and how they could be involved in supplying goods and services to the project. The most common topics raised by participants included what materials would be required to construct the project and how the project would be staged.

At the end of the session, all participants were encouraged to sign up to receive notifications about opportunities through the Industry Capability Network (ICN) portal. There was a 29% increase in registrations to the ICN portal following the event.

Stakeholder Liaison Group

The SLG members shared valuable insights into community perceptions of the NWT D project and topics of interest to their stakeholders. The SLG also provided valuable feedback on the wider program, engagement activities and communications materials.

During each meeting the SLG were asked to share feedback from their stakeholders and community about the project. The most commonly raised topics included visual amenity, economic development, and landowner consultation. Continued interest in the project, its benefits and the specific opportunities for the tourism, training, and education sectors was also raised by the SLG.

The requirement for simplified, succinct, and accessible communication materials was noted by the SLG, as was the importance of maintaining open and transparent communication with the community. The provision of timely information was noted as of particular importance to facilitate understanding of, and preparedness for, education, training, and employment opportunities.

The SLG also commented that the Project Team should consider increasing the community's understanding of Project Marinus and renewable energy developments, whilst being aware of potential engagement fatigue across the region.

The SLG provided feedback on broadening the membership of the group in 2023, with a focus on including representatives from the social housing and employment sectors. In addition, the SLG shared their support for the proposed topics for 2023 which included the NWT D Economic Development Action Plan, and employment, skills and training opportunities and preparedness.



Community Benefits Sharing Program

A series of engagement activities were undertaken to capture feedback from stakeholders and the broader North West community on the Youth Panel's draft CBSP recommendations and governance arrangements for the CBSP.

Table 1 outlines the topics discussed across each engagement activity. A summary of feedback received on each topic is outlined below.

The combined feedback from the engagement activities was presented to the Youth Panel who considered this in developing the final CBSP. They were also asked to provide feedback on the Youth Panel process itself and a summary of their feedback is outlined below.

	Community BBQs	Online survey	Focus groups	Stakeholder workshops	Stakeholder Liaison Group
CBSP focus areas	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Eligibility requirements	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Who can apply	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Governance arrangements				✓	✓

CBSP focus areas

Across the engagement activities there was general support for the seven focus areas, noting the need for them to be outcomes focused to demonstrate what they are trying to achieve. There was varied feedback about which focus areas would provide the most benefit, although stakeholders and focus group participants generally supported:

- Health and wellbeing
- Education
- Environment/sustainability
- Accessibility/reliable services
- Community infrastructure.

Some participants across the activities identified that some focus areas were the responsibility of government, and this should be considered in refining the focus areas. Some suggested that 'encouraging a sense of community' could be an overarching theme of the CBSP and that education could be 'elevated' to economic and social inclusion. Other feedback suggested a focus on skills and training was encouraged, especially if it is jobs related.

Eligibility requirements

There was general support across all activities for the benefits of the CBSP going to defined communities but mixed feedback in terms of what those defined communities could be. Across the engagement activities there was general agreement that priority be given to those directly affected by the project, and some inconsistent agreement with priority being given to those who are indirectly affected. The need for a structured decision-making process to objectively prioritise initiatives/communities was raised and there was some concern that prioritising one community over another may be divisive.

Feedback showed varied support for the demonstrated values identified in the draft recommendations. It was noted there could be an overlap with the focus areas, the values may add another level of burden on applicants and some concern that beneficial initiatives may not be able to demonstrate them.

There were mixed views about the requirement for initiatives to address a deficit within the community. Feedback included potential difficulties in demonstrating a deficiency and lack of clarity of some detail within this requirement. Overall, feedback suggested there was an implicit agreement with any funded initiatives needing to have a positive impact and a demonstrated benefit for the community.

Who can apply

There was consistent agreement that the CBSP should exclude applications for religious or political purposes. Across the engagement activities, feedback demonstrated agreement that the CBSP should support smaller, community organisations and exclude large corporations.

CBSP Governance

There was consistent support from stakeholders and the SLG for the administration of the CBSP to be managed by TasNetworks, with any decisions on funding allocation to be community led. The establishment of an independent, North West based community assessment panel for the CBSP was also commonly endorsed. A tiered funding model was supported, as was the reduction of administrative burden wherever possible. This was noted as of particular importance for initiatives applying for lower funding amounts.

There was general agreement that different application processes should be established for each funding tier, and the option for co-funding for larger amounts considered.

An increased requirement of information and detail for any application for the higher funding amounts was also supported.

Stakeholder feedback included a suggested focus of the CBSP on fostering innovation and capability building for both applicants and those involved in the governance of the program. The importance of a flexible structure for the community assessment panel was noted, as was ensuring diversity within its membership.



Youth Panel – Final CBSP recommendations

The reconvened Youth Panel considered the stakeholder and broader community feedback on their Draft CBSP recommendations. In their final meeting, they developed and agreed their final recommendations for the development of a CBSP and presented their recommendations to TasNetworks.

The final CBSP addressed the following areas:

- What projects and/or activities should be awarded funding under the program
- Who should be awarded funding under the program
- How the community benefits program should be delivered.

The final recommendations for the development of a NWTD CBSP will be made available on the NWTD website.

At the conclusion of the Youth Panel process, we asked participants to share their feedback on their experience of the Youth Panel process. Results demonstrated that participants believed the Youth Panel process was genuine, helped them build new skills and knowledge, and improve their skills in working with others. Participants also shared that they valued that their feedback has shaped the project.

“What I valued most about the Youth Panel process was the fact that I felt like I was actually ‘heard’, and that my recommendations will shape the Tasmanian community”

Youth Panel member

The majority of the participants also indicated their interest in participating in future professional development opportunities with TasNetworks.



How your feedback will be used

Helping us shape the development of the project

The feedback collected through our pop-up information sessions, the telephone survey, industry event, SLG meetings and landowner discussions are helping us understand what you value about your local area and what you are concerned about.

A summary of the feedback from each engagement activity has been provided to our technical experts so it could be considered in the development of the technical and environmental studies, including the Social Impact Assessment.

The feedback summaries have also been provided to our engineers and designers to identify opportunities to refine the design of the transmission line to address specific concerns and minimise impacts. We continue to make adjustments to the location of transmission towers on properties to minimise impacts on farming operations based on feedback we receive from landowners.

Your feedback has also encouraged us to explore opportunities to improve the amenity of transmission line easements located in urban areas. Our investigations are in the early stages, and a number of factors need to be considered to understand what is possible. We will keep you updated about this opportunity.

Helping shape our community benefits sharing program

The feedback provided by stakeholders and the broader community was considered and used by the Youth Panel to refine their draft framework and deliver their final recommendations for the development of a CBSP for the NWTD. The next step in developing the program is presenting the final CBSP recommendations to the TasNetworks Board in March 2023.

Work will then continue to develop the program ready for launch, including finalising the governance arrangements for the program. Updates on the establishment of the CBSP will be provided via NWTD eNews updates and published on talkwithtasnetworks.com.au

We will continue to provide the Youth Panel participants with ongoing professional development opportunities. Planned opportunities include participation in events, ongoing involvement in the CBSP, media training and participation in the SLG.

Helping us communicate better

Your feedback is helping us understand how you like to receive information and what topics you want to know more about.

We will continue to use a range of methods to share information about the project including our project website, social media channels, e-newsletters, local newspapers and face-to-face events. We will also introduce new tools including graphics and videos to share information about topics you have said you want to know more about.

We have started developing our engagement program for 2023 which has also been informed by your preferences and advice. Our program includes dedicated sessions to provide general information about the project, the planning and approvals process, and environmental impacts.

To be the first to know about upcoming engagement opportunities, you can register for our e-newsletter by visiting tasnetworks.com.au/nwtd, emailing us on NWTD@tasnetworks.com.au or calling us on 1300 127 777.

Contacting the team

We are committed to working closely with landowners and the community as the project develops to understand what is important to you and what we need to consider to achieve the best outcomes for the environment, landowners, and community.

You can contact us with any questions about the project on the details provided here.



talkwith.tasnetworks.com.au



NWTD@tasnetworks.com.au



1300 127 777



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